

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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O P 061642Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0642

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

USINT HAVANA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRAZZAVILLE 0705

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, EAID CF, CG, US, AO, FR

SUBJECT: CHARGE'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT YHOMBY-OPANGO, JUNE 5

1. MID-DAY JUNE 5, PROTOCOL REQUESTED CHARGE MEET WITH
PRESIDENTY YHOMBY-OPANGO AT 4 P.M. WE LEARNED IN INERIM
THAT PAN-AFRICAN PEACE FORCE WAS TO BE SUBJECT DISCUSSED,
AND THAT MEETING WITH AMERICANS WAS TO PRECEDE THAT WITH
FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

2. YHOMBY-OPANGO BEGAN MEETING, ALSO ATTENDED BY FOREIGN
MINISTER OBENGA, BY EXTENDING LENGTHY TRIBUTES TO GEORGE
WASHINGTON AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN, UNDERLING IMPORTANCE
WHICH THEY HAD ATTACHED TO NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. AMONG
REASONS CONGOLESE SOUGHT TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH
UNITED STATES WAS BELIEF THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION
HAD SAME RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOVEREIGNTY. IT
WAS ESPECIALLY DISAPPOINT, THEREFORE, TO FIND US
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ASSISTING "PAN AFRICAN INTERVENTION FORCE." CONGO WOULD
HAVE HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH CREATION OF SUCH A FORCE BY
OAU; NOR WOULD THERE BE ANY OBJECTION FROM BRAZZAVILLE
WERE FOREIGN TROOPS PRESENT IN ZAIRE UNDER A BILATERAL
AGREEMENT. BUT HOW COULD SOVEREIGNTY OF OTHERS BE PROTECTED
WITH A FORCE NOW PRESENT IN ZAIRE WHICH STYLES
ITSELF AS A TRANSCONTINENTAL INTERVENTION MECHANISM?

3. YHOMBY WENT ON TO SAY CONGO WANTS DESPARATELY TO HAVE PEACE IN CENTRAL AFRICA: HE HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. THEY EACH HAVE PROBLEMS; SO DOES HE: THEREFORE, INTERESTS OF ALL ARE BEST SERVED BY PEACE. YHOMBY POINTED OUT THAT GOCB HAD CHOSEN NOT TO TAKE SIDES DURING SHABA EVENTS, THAT WAS NOT HIS AFFAIR. BUT, HE LAMENTED, PRESIDENT MOBUTU SEEMED NOW TO BELIEVE CONGO WAS AMONG "PROVOKERS" OF SHABA INVASION, AND HE PLANNED TO DISCUSS THIS SHORTLY WITH ZAIRIAN AMBASSADOR HERE. THINKING ALOUD, AND LOOKING AT AN IMPASSIVE OBENGA, YHOMBY REFERRED TO KATALI/EBAKA MISSIONS TO LUANDA AND KINSHASA, SAYING THAT HE NEVERTHELESS FEARED A CONGOLESE MEDIATION EFFORT AT THIS POINT WOULD NOT WORK--PERHAPS "SOON", BUT NOW NOW. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID, HE REMAINS READY TO DO WHATEVER HE CAN TO BRING SIDES TOGETHER.

4. YHOMBY ASKED THAT HIS VIEWS BE TRANSMITTED TO WASHINGTON WHILE, AT THE SAME TIME, UNDERLINING THAT THIS QUESTION DOES NOT, IN HIS VIEW, AFFECT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS: THESE ARE "EXCELLENT." HE WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT CONGOLESE MEDIA WOULD BE CRITICIZING US ROLE OVER COMING DAYS. YHOMBY ASKED TO SEE CHARGE AGAIN LATER THIS WEEK, PRIOR TO YHOMBY'S FORTHCOMING TRAVEL TO NORTH OF COUNTRY, TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC WAYS IN WHICH

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US CAN FURTHER ASSIST CONGO ECONOMICALLY.

5. CHARGE SET FORTH US POSITION CONCERNING ROLE IN TRANSPORT OF TROOPS AND MATERIAL, AND AT PARIS TALKS, ALONG LINES STATE 141051. YHOMBY SEEMED TO APPRECIATE OUR ROLE AS INDEED BEING LIMITED AND SPECIFIC, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF MAINTAINING ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF SHABA. CHARGE REITERATED THAT ONE OF BASES FOR US RETURN TO BRAZZAVILLE WAS GOCB'S KNOWLEDGE THAT WE DO NOT SEEK A CLIENT-STATE RELATIONSHIP WITH CONGO. NORDO WE WWITH ANY OTHER NATION. SIMILARLY, OUR SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOVEREIGNTY REMAINS BASIC TO OUR POLICY. YHOMBY WAS MOST CONCERNED, OBVIOUSLY, WITH THREAT HE PERSONALLY PERCEIVES AS COMING FROM FRENCH, AND TO A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE, WE BELIEVE, WITH THE VERY SEMANTICS OF THE TITLE (WHICH WE AVOIDED), "INTERVENTION FORCE". YHOMBY CLEARLY PICTURES SUCH A PRESENCE AS PREPRESENTING A MOBILE STRIKE FORCE READY TO REVERSE AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS WITH WHICH PARIS IS NOT ALTOGETHER CONTENT, E.G., CONGOL.

KATZEN

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